GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:205
ANSWERED ON:04.12.2001
CONFERENCE OF STATE MINISTERS ON WATER SUPPLY IN VILLAGES
CHANDRA NATH SINGH

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Conference of the Ministers of various States was held recently regarding augmentation of the supply of potable water in villages;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the decision taken in the Conference;

(c) whether the Government propose to recover maintenance charges from the villagers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU)

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to the Lok Sabha Starred Question No.205 for reply on 4.12.2001

(a) & (b) Yes, Sir. A conference of State Ministers of Rural Water Supply was held on 19th and 20th October 2001.A gist of the recommendations of the conference is annexed.

(c) & (d) One of the subjects discussed in the said Conference was the relaxation of norms for coverage of rural habitations with drinking water. The present norms provide for 40 liters per capita per day (lpcd) with a source within 1.6 km in the plains or 100 meter elevation in the hills. After detailed discussion, the Conference recommended that once the coverage of all rural habitations in any State is achieved, the norms for coverage may be relaxed to provide for 55 lpcd with a source within 0.5 km in the plains or 50 metres elevations in the hills. The concept of community participation was also agreed upon to be adopted in normal Rural Water Supply Programme after full coverage of habitations as per the present norms. In cases, where the service levels are augmented beyond the present norms, 10% of the capital cost and the responsibility of operation and maintenance are to be borne by the community.

The principle of partial capital cost sharing and full operation and maintenance responsibility has already been adopted as part of the Sector Reform Projects in 63 selected pilot districts in 26 States across the country. It is envisaged that people`s participation in planning, execution and management will inculcate a sense of ownership amongst the community thereby ensuring better sustainability of the water supply systems.

Annex

Enclosure referred to in the Statement to the reply to Lok Sabha Starred Qn. No 205 for reply on 04.12.01

Gist of recommendations of the State Ministers Conference on Rural Drinking Water held on 19-20 October 2001

1. Once the coverage of all rural habitations in any State is achieved, the norms for coverage may be relaxed to provide for 55 ltrs per capita per day with a source within 0.5 km in the plains or 50 metres elevation in the hills. The concept of community participation would be adopted in normal Rural Water Supply programmes after full coverage of habitations as per the present norms. In cases, where the service levels are augmented beyond the present norms, 10% of the capital cost and the responsibility of operation and maintenance are to be borne by the community.

2. Most of the States agreed to implement the strategy for ensuring the coverage of all the remaining 18,695 not-covered (NC) and 1,58,675 partially covered (PC) habitations within the stipulated timeframe.

3. In the criteria for allocation of funds to States, the weightage for NC/PC habitations should be increased from 10% to 15% and weightage for quality affected habitations from 5% to 10%. It was also recommended that 5% of the total ARWSP funds be specifically earmarked for meeting contingencies arising out of natural calamities in the Rural Water Supply sector, subject to the condition that the funds left unutilised up to November can be ploughed back into the normal programme thereafter.

4. States were in favour of a re-survey of all habitations in all their respective States and Union Territories for making a realistic assessment of the situation.

5. All State Governments agreed to file claims for release of 2nd instalment of ARWSP funds by December 2001.Bihar, Jharkhand and Manipur Governments will take earnest steps to furnish necessary details for release of 1st Installment of ARWSP fund for the current year.

6. The North-East to draw up Special Action Plan for implementation of various schemes under ARWSP to ensure proper development of the region.

7. All the States were requested to complete the on-going survey of quality-affected habitations positively by 31.12. 2001.

8. It was also agreed upon that the concept of dual water supply in quality-affected habitations should be adopted so that treated water up to 10 lpcd for drinking and cooking and untreated water for other purposes could be provided in such habitations.

9. Out of 567 water quality testing laboratories, 352 laboratories still remain to be set up. All States agreed to commission the remaining laboratories by 31.3.2002

10. All State Governments except Tamil Nadu and Gujarat agreed to complete the pre-1998 Sub-Mission projects by 31st December 2001.

11. The need for focussing attention on sustainability measures, like rainwater harvesting, watershed programme, artificial recharge, etc by utilising the prescribed proportion of funds under the ARWSP and Prime Minster`s Gramodaya Yojana (Drinking Water Supply component) was reiterated.

12. The Conference recommended that Ground Water legislation is necessary to promote drought proofing measures and protection of drinking water sources.

13. It was agreed that there is need to pay more attention to programmes relating to Human Resource Development and Information Education and Communication, computerization and Management Information System.

14. The status of implementation of Sector Reform projects was reviewed andvarious ways and means were suggested to overcome the bottlenecks faced in project implementation.

15. Conference recommended the mode of implementation in respect of multi-village schemes and high cost quality treatment plants in sector reform districts.